ISLAMIC CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

ADVANCED

BOOK ONE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE: BELIEFS

1. Why Religion. 3

Why Study Religion? 3 Some Necessary Qualities of Religion. 5

2. Ways of Knowing God. 9

1st Method: The Inner Way. 9 2nd Method: Experiment Beyond Sensation. 10

3. Design in the Universe. 17

4. More About God. 23

The Eternal Need for God. 23 God Occupies No Space. 25 Is God Visible? 26 God is in Need of Nothing. 26 God's Omniscience. 27

5. The One & Only God. 33

6. *Tawhid & Sifat.* 39

Tawhid - Monotheism. 39 *Sifat* - the Attributes of God. 40

7. The Justice of God. 45

God's Justice. 45 What is Justice[7] 46 The Vicissitudes in the Life of Man. 37

8. Prophets & Human Guidance. 53

The Purpose of Life. 53 Human Conscience. 54 Human Intelligence. 54 The Divine Guidance. 55 Role of Miracles in Prophethood. 56

9. The Purity of the Prophets. 61

Why the Prophets must *be Ma 'sum?* 61 How can a person be *Ma 'sum?* 63

10. Prophets & Scriptures. 69

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LESSON 1

WHY RELIGION?

1. Why Study Religion?

Why should we investigate about religion and study about God? What provokes us to consider religion? There are three reasons:

(A) LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE:

We all want to know the truth about the world in which we live: Did the heaven with its beautiful stars, the earth with its glorious landscapes, the beautiful birds, the colourful fish, the blue oceans and the high mountains—did all these come into being by themselves or are they the product of an All-Knowing and Powerful Creator?

Besides all this, the first question that comes to mind for all of us is the origin of ourselves: Where did we come from? Why are we in this world? Where are we heading to? The love of knowledge and the searching spirit within us dictates that we must not rest until we find the answers to these questions.

Thus the first reason that compels us to inquire into religion is our thirst and love for knowledge.

(B) THE SENSE OF THANKFULNESS

The world around us and the world within ourselves is full of marvelous things. The sun and moon, the plants and trees, the mines and minerals hidden deep in the heart of the earth; all of them are of great benefit to mankind.

Within ourselves, we have the digestive system, the respiratory apparatus, the heart and other organs of the body; but the greatest of all, however, is the intellectual ability of man himself through which he can make a mighty mountain crumble into pieces, and create from water and iron enormous power and the most delicate objects.

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Now this question poses itself: Should we not engage ourselves in research and inquiry until, if there is a benefactor, we acknowledge that benefactor, to fulfill our duty and offer him our thanks?

This is the second reason why we should inquire into religion.

(c) PREVENTING POSSIBLE DANGER

If a child were to come and tell you that he saw a poisonous snake go into the room you were in, you would immediately jump up from your chair and undertake a thorough search of every nook and cranny until you found it, or until you were satisfied that it was not there.

Similarly, while traveling by night in a dangerous country, if you learnt that bandits were waiting on the road ahead to ambush you—you would without any doubt wait until the way ahead was clear of danger, and would not take a single step forward until then.

In these two examples, we have made clear that reason compels us to investigate conceivable dangers. It is possible that some of the harmful things may turn out to be nothing at all, and that other people may not pay any attention to them; but if an inquiry carries the price of a human soul, then it cannot be ignored.

In the history of mankind, we learn of people who were famous for telling the truth and who lived an honest life. They claimed that they were messengers of God, and they called people towards God and to act in certain ways. As a result of the efforts and the constant sufferings of these special people in all corners of the world, many groups believed in them. Thus the birth of Jesus became the beginning of the Christian calendar and the migration of the Prophet Muhammad was taken by the Muslims as the beginning of their calendar.

Now, we see that these messengers attracted men to religion and to follow particular rules, caused them to fear punishment of their bad deeds and convinced them that they would be tried in the Great Court of Justice before the Righteous and Wise Judge. They

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trembled at the hardships and perils of Resurrection and the harshness of the punishment there, and warned men of the dire consequences of evil deeds.

The question is: Do the warnings of these people make us realize the possibility of harm and danger in the same way as did the warning of the small child in the example mentioned above? Is it right to ignore the words of the messengers of God who, after all, were men of high moral standards and who made greatest sacrifices for their cause?

Clearly, the words of the messengers —if they do not make a man certain— at least provoke him to think: perhaps what they say is true. If what they say is true, then what is our duty? What answer will we have in the Court of the Great Judge?

Common sense reckons the necessity of preventing this "possible harm". What is more, these messengers and prophets call man to a healthy and civilized life, and they also say that after death an extensive new world and everlasting blessings await one who has performed his

duty. Does reason allow us to ignore this important message?

* * *

There is a similar argument known as the "Pascal's Bet," named so after the famous French mathematician, Pascal (d. 1662 CE). Pascal proved the importance of inquiring about religion in the following way: If you believe in the life-hereafter, you will gain everything if it really exists; and you lose nothing if it does not exist. Therefore, it is better to bet that it does exist.

The theme of this argument was presented by the Shi'a Imams long before Pascal. We also know that Pascal had read Abu Hamid al Ghazali's works. It, therefore, seems quite possible that Pascal might have read this argument from Imam 'Ali (a.s.), the first. Shi'a Imam, as quoted in *Mizdnu 'l-A^mal* of al-Ghazali. Imam 'All said:

The astrologer and the physician both say, The *dead will never be resurrected.*

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I say: 'Keep your counsel. If your idea is correct, I will come to no harm; but if my belief is correct, then you will surely lose.'

***

2. Some Necessary Qualities of Religion

The religion which can fulfill the needs of mankind must have the following qualities:

(a) It must satisfy the intelligence and intellect of human beings.

Islam gives foremost importance to human intelligence. Islam emphasizes that you must understand the faith and then believe in it. Belief follows understanding, and not vice versa.

(b) It must teach and demonstrate dignity of human beings. Islam places human beings over and above all other creations of God; it promotes equality among human beings. Islam does not allow human beings to lose their dignity by bowing down in worship to a fellow man, animal or an inanimate object.

(c) It must be a complete guide to develop the body, mind and spirit of humans as a whole.

Islam does not only develop the soul at the expense of the body; nor does it promote the care of the body at the expense of the soul. It promotes development of all aspects of human life in a balanced way. Islam not only talks in general terms about the code of life; it gives specific details and also provides examples in the lives of the prophets and imams.

(d) It must conform with human nature.

The teachings of Islam takes the human nature into consideration. It does not promote, for example, celibacy which is completely against human nature.

(e) It should not be a tool in the hands of oppressors to suppress the masses.

Islam promotes social justice and rejects the theory of predestination. The oppression of a tyrant ruler is not predestined by God. This leaves no room for the tyrant rulers and oppressors to

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say that the masses have been predestined for serving the ruling class.

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This lesson is based on:

Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi.. *Need of Religion,* Tanzania 1970.

Dar Rah-e Haq. *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982.

Nasir Makarim Shirazi, *Principles of Islamic Ideology,* Tehran 1985.

It has been compiled & edited for this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 1
WHY RELIGION?

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [20 points]

Tick the appropriate box:

	TRUE	FALSE
(a) Study of religion involves a sincere inquiry into the possible existence of a supreme creator.		
(b) Our rational thinking provokes us to reflect upon this infinite universe and a possible creator.		
(c) Religion is a set of rituals.		
(d) The birth of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was taken by Muslims as the beginning of their calendar.		
(e) Religious investigation can be thought of as an investment which might generate profit in the life hereafter but guaranteed to produce no loss.		
(f) Islam condones the theory of predestination.		
(g) Our sense of gratitude dictates that we should offer our thanks to our creator if He exists.		
(h) Islam promotes the suppression of legitimate desires.		
(i) Faith has no rational basis.		
The truth is what one believes in.		
(j) Prophets were pious people who preached good things and forbade people from doing evil things.		

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Question 2: [20 points]

From the statements given below, give a number (in order of preference) to the ones that best describe the essential qualities of an effective religion. If you think that a statement is completely disqualified as a quality of an effective religion, then do not assign any number to it.

(a) Preaches unity of creator and creatures.

(b) Promotes faith based on understanding.

(c) Preserves human dignity.

(d) Preaches division of society into various classes to create order, discipline and cohesion.

(e) Promotes and practically implements equality, fairness and justice.

(f) Conforms to human nature.

(g) Promotes abandonment of the material luxuries of life to elevate the soul.

(h) Promotes celibacy as a means of spiritual upliftment.

(i) Provides a complete and comprehensive code of life,

(j) Promotes suppression of natural desires to achieve closeness to God.

Question 3: [10 points]

Describe three reasons of your own (other than those discussed in this lesson) that might provoke humans to contemplate on religious matters.

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LESSON 2

WAYS OF KNOWING GOD

From time immemorial, man has found different ways of knowing God. Human beings of various intellectual levels have found their own ways to God. Common people have found simple ways; whereas thinkers and philosophers reached the same conclusion on a higher plane of thought. The two most common ways of knowing the Creator are:

- the inner way (which is also the closest way).
- the outer way (which is also the clearest way).

First Method: The Inner Way

God has created the inner light in each and every human being. If we go deep within ourselves and touch our souls, we hear the message of God. History and anthropology has shown that if man is left alone and is not indoctrinated by any school of thought—then, sooner or later, his inner voice will lead him to believe in a power as the Creator and Maintainer of this world.

However, at times this natural feeling is subdued by external means. But it re-emerges when that person finds himself in difficulties—he naturally prays to a Power whom he believes to be above all powers. This is very well portrayed in the talk which Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.), the sixth Imam of the Shi'a Muslims, had with an atheist.

Knowing that the atheist had gone on sea voyages several times, the Imam asked:

"Have you ever been caught in a fierce storm in the middle of nowhere, your rudder gone, your sails torn away, trying desperately to keep your boat afloat?" The Atheist: "Yes."

The Imam: "And sometimes perhaps even that leaking boat went down leaving you exhausted and helpless at the mercy of the raging waves?" The Atheist: "Yes."

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The Imam: "Was not there, in all that despair, a glimmer of hope in your heart that some unnamed and unknown power could still save you?"

When the atheist agreed, the Imam said, "That power is God." That atheist was intelligent. He knew the truth when he saw it.

The "inner way," in spite of being the natural and closest way of knowing God, is also a very personal way. It is only sufficient for the person who has seen the light within himself.

Second Method: Experiment Beyond Sensation:

The second way of knowing God is by studying the signs of His presence and power in the world within us and around us. The Qur'an has mentioned both these signs as follows: *"We shall show to them Our signs upon the horizons (i.e., space) and in their own selves so that it may become manifest to them that He is the Truth."* (41:53) This method of knowing God is based on the principle of "cause" and "effect". The signs of nature are the effects of which the ultimate cause is God.

Now, let us try to understand the nature and scope of this method more clearly.

***

NATURE & SCOPE OF THIS METHOD:

Whenever we see a beautiful building of great splendour and design, we can easily understand that its architect was an expert in his own craft. Similarly, by looking at a car, an airplane, a computer or any other well-designed product or artifact, we are invariably guided to well-informed and knowledgeable inventors, designers and manufacturers, and we are also made aware of their skill and learning.

In none of these instances is it necessary to actually see the builder, the manufacturer or the designer of such an artifact with our own eyes to testify to his existence.

Moreover, when observing all these things, it is not with any of our external senses that we perceive the knowledge and skill of the

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builders and manufacturers. But, nevertheless, we believe in his expertise and knowledge. Why? Because the design and order which we perceived in the artifacts forces us to recognize the knowledge of their builders. And from this we reach the conclusion that it is not necessary that something whose existence we wish to believe in should be visible or tangible.

There are many things which are not perceptible to our external senses, but we become aware of them through their effects. For every wise person understands that there can be no effect without a cause, nothing orderly without a wise and knowledgeable designer.

Based on the above, we can divide the things of this world into two categories:

1. Things which are evident to one or more of the five senses; we observe visible things with the eyes, we hear sounds with the ears, we become aware of pleasant and unpleasant smells with our nose, we know bitter and sweet tastes with our tongue, and we feel hot and cold or rough and smooth with the skin of our body.
2. Things which are not perceived by any of the five senses, but whose existence we can deduce by considering their effects. These facts are not all of one kind, some are material and some are non-material. We shall mention a few of them here.

Electricity: By merely looking at two wires, one of which is electrified, we can never determine which of them has an electric current. We can only discover the existence of this current from the effect of electricity, e.g., a lamp being lit. So electricity is something which exists although our eyes cannot directly see it.

Gravity: If you let go of the book which you now have in your hand, it will fall to the ground, i.e., the ground will pull the book towards itself. This power is something which we do not directly perceive through our senses. Gravitation is again one of those things which is not visible, but we come to know its existence by observing its effect: the falling of bodies to the ground.

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Magnetism: When we place a magnet beside a piece of iron, we do not see anything except the two objects. But when the iron is pulled towards the magnet, we discover that magnetism exists around the magnet.

Invisible Radiation: If we shine white sunlight through a prism we see on the other side of the crystal six colours (the spectrum) which are: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. No more colours are to be seen on both extremes of the spectrum. However, scientists have discovered that in the place where the eyes see no more light, further ‘colours’ exist which have heating and chemical properties. These lights' are called infra-red and ultra-violet.

Intelligence & Mental Image: All of us are aware of ourselves, i.e., we perceive that we exist; and we also arrive at concepts in a gradual manner concerning matters outside ourselves which we explain by this kind of statement: "I solved the most difficult mathematical problem." Also, man is aware of his own knowledge: he knows that he knows. Intelligence is not something visible or audible in the sense that man can see it with his eyes or hear it with his ears; but everyone finds it in himself. Others cannot learn about my intelligence through the five senses, but they can deduce its presence from the effect it produces. For example, when a scientist is expounding on a problem, it becomes clear that he has understood it.

People can construct in their own minds any form that they wish, e.g., a tower similar to the Eiffel Tower whose construction in the external world required many years, a thousand sorts of different building materials and substances, and hundreds of workers; this can be built in the mind in an instant. It is clear that others cannot be informed directly of the creations of our minds, because they are not visible and audible, but they can discover their existence from our speech.

Life: A beautiful chicken, moving towards the water, falls into a pond, and, before we can rescue it, it dies. At this very moment, what change has taken place in the chicken; and what difference has occurred that it no longer moves, plays or eats?

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There surely was something in the live chicken but which does not exist in the dead—life itself. Life is not an object of the senses. We only perceive the effects of life: movement, feeding, etc., and from these effects we discover its existence.

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The facts mentioned above make it thoroughly clear that over and above the beings that we perceive with our sensory organs, there are also things which we do not directly perceive, but we know about them only through the effects they produce.

Thus we draw the conclusion that it is not right for us to reject something which we do not see only because it is not visible, because invisibility is different from non-existence. Moreover, the way of discovering something is not confined to the eyes or other external senses. The human mind can discover something by means of the effects of those things, as we saw in the examples mentioned above.

We do not wish to say that God is similar to the scientific examples mentioned above, because God is a reality above those things, nothing is equal or comparable to Him. Our intention, however, is to say that in the same way as we discover the existence of those things through their effects, we can also discover the existence of God through His signs.

Discovering the existence of God through His signs is the "outer way" of knowing Him.

Thus, those who deny the existence of God just because they cannot see Him with their eyes, are blind as far as their eyes of wisdom and contemplation is concerned—since we know that His existence can be demonstrated through the precise design and order of creation. To these people we say, with the poet:

Open thy heart's eye for your soul to see, And what is invisible will be manifest to thee.

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This lesson is based on the followings:

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Dar Rah-e Haq Board, *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982.
Nasir Makarim Shirazi, *Principles of Islamic Ideology,* Tehran 1985.
Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, *Need of Religion,* Tanzania 1970.
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Question Paper on Lesson 2
WAYS OF KNOWING GOD

Name: _____ *Student No._____*

Question 1: [10 points]

Tick the appropriate box:

	TRUE	**FALSE**
(a) Anything that has order or design implies a creator		
(b) Invisibility implies non-existence.		
(c) The inner way is the clearest way of knowing God.		
(d) We can perceive things by observing their effects.		
(e) Science and reasoning cannot measure everything that exists in this universe.		

Question 2: [20 points]

Name at least three things (besides the examples described in this lesson) that cannot be detected by our five common senses, i.e., vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

Question 3: [20 points]

Lesson 2 states that there are two most common ways of knowing the Creator, namely (1) the inner way and (2) the outer way. Explain this idea using somewhat different terminology from that used in this lesson.

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LESSON 3

DESIGN IN THE UNIVERSE

In this universe, from the smallest atom to the largest celestial body, in everything we see, we are reminded of its perfect orderliness and exact regulation, so much so that great scientists have been provoked to amazement. One look at the world around us makes it clear that all things in it are in full coordination with one another. The nourishment of living creatures, for example, depends on the coordination between the sun, clouds, rain, earth and its resources. All this points to the existence of one coordinated system in the universe.

There is so much orderliness in nature that the scientists, by using the immutable laws of nature, can explain the course any phenomenon will take before it occurs. For this reason, scientists endeavour to discover these laws. For if these laws did not hold would not every kind of effort in this field be fruitless?

So let us look at some examples of the order and design in the universe:

The **earth** in which we live, with respect to its size, its distance from the sun, the speed of its orbital movement, etc., is so arranged that it is able to act as the support for life. If the smallest change were to take place in its condition, losses of unacceptable dimensions would occur.

"The earth rotates on its axis at one thousand miles an hour; if it turned at one hundred miles an hour, our days and nights would be ten times as long as now, and the hot sun would then burn up our vegetation during each long day while in the long night any surviving sprout would freeze.

"Again, the sun, the source of our life, has a surface temperature of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and our earth is just far enough away so that this "eternal fire[1] warms us just enough and not too much! If the sun gave off only one-half of its present radiation, we would freeze, and if it gave half as much more, we would roast.

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"The slant of the earth, tilted at an angle of 23 degrees, gives us our seasons; if it had not been so tilted, vapours from the ocean would move north and south, piling up for us continents of ice. If our moon was, say, only 50 thousand miles away instead of its actual distance, our tides would be so enormous that twice a day all continents would be submerged; even the mountains would soon be eroded away. If the crust of the earth had been only ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen without which animal life must die. Had the ocean been a few feet deeper, carbon dioxide and oxygen would have been absorbed and no vegetable life could exist."[1]

The **atmosphere,** most of whose constituent elements are life-giving gases, is sufficiently viscous that it can, like a shield or armour, protect the earth from the deadly attack of 200 million meteors every day, which approach the earth with a speed of 50 km per second. The responsibility for regulating the temperature of the earth's surface within limits which maintain life also belongs to the atmosphere, and if it did not exist, inhabited land, like the dry deserts, would become incapable of supporting life. "Because of these, and a host of other examples, there is not one chance in millions that life on our planet is an accident."[2]

But why are we taking the long way round in explaining these things?

Nearer than anything else is our own **body.** The mysteries of man's existence are without number, so much so that the world's scientists, after years of research and study, have not yet been able to fathom all the wonders of it. After many years of study, Dr. Alexis Carel wrote a book called *L 'homme, cet inconnue (Man, the Unknown).* He confessed that biology and other sciences were

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[1] A. C. Morrison quoted in S. Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, *God of Islam,* Tanzania 1969, p. 31.

[2] *Ibid.*

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still unable to discover the facts about the working of the human body, and that many problems remained to be unraveled.

Now let us examine some of the marvels of our own existence.

THE CELLS OF THE BODY: A human body is like a building. It is composed of small building blocks called cells, each of which is itself a living entity. In the structure of the cells most metals such as iron, copper and calcium are used as are other elements like oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen and sulphur.

The number of cells in the body of man is about 10*6 which is equivalent to ten thousand, million, million.

Each one of these living cells works in perfect cooperation with the next, and all of them follow the same aim. They are very quick to suffer, having low tolerance levels, and nourishment must be correctly supplied for their needs.

The blood, with the help of the heart, performs this duty very well. The structure of the heart is well-designed and has perfect dimensions, so that it can supply blood to the whole body through the agency of the blood vessels and the capillaries.

The blood, after it has delivered nourishment to the cells, absorbs poisonous substances which have accumulated there and returns to the heart with a dull colour. The heart delivers this to the lungs, a filtering apparatus for the blood, whereupon it is resupplied to the whole body with a bright colour and greater freshness. While passing through the kidneys, another part of these poisonous matters are removed, so that no kind of disturbance arises in the general working of the body.

Do we not see in the precise combination and quantity of the metals and elements from which the cell is formed, and also the amazing structure of the heart and its way of working, a plan of perfect and superior design? And if we see in the human body, a mysterious whole and at the same time a design, are we exaggerating?

Without doubt, no.

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* * *

In the same way we must confess that the world of existence firmly rests on the foundation of perfect orderliness, and undoubtedly every orderliness and design is the creation and accomplishment of a wise and powerful maker.

The same argument demonstrates that design and orderliness must have originated from a source of knowledge and power, and that chance cannot be the origin of marvels having design and orderliness simply because everything produces a particular effect: it is incorrect to suppose that design and order should come from chance or mere accident. The scientific "law of probability" makes it impossible to explain the coordination in this world on the basis of chance. According to the law of probability, for example, an illiterate person can never write an essay by randomly hitting the keys of a typewriter. Similarly, the present system in our universe could never have come to exist on the basis of chance or accident.

It therefore follows that the wonderful design and order that is observed in the human body and in the universe around us constitutes complete evidence and living proof that the universe has a wise and powerful designer and creator. The more we learn about the system of creation, the more aware we become of the greatness of its Creator.

Even the things produced by human beings themselves reflect the knowledge and intelligence of the Creator, because it is not possible for someone who has no understanding and intelligence to give to His creations such understanding and intelligence.

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This lesson is based on the followings:
Dar Rah-e Haq Board, *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982.
Few details have been added from S. Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, *God of Islam,* Tanzania, 1969 and Nasir Makarim Shirazi, *Principles of Islamic Ideology,* Tehran 1985.
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Question Paper on Lesson 3
DESIGN IN THE UNIVERSE

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [15 points]

Fill in the blanks:

(a) Intelligent creations are possible only by an _____ creator.

(b) The more we come to know about the universe, the more we *realize* how _____ we know.

(c) The number of cells in human body is _____.

(d) Organization and discipline in this universe indicates a _____ and powerful _____.

(e) Dr. Alexis Carel wrote a book called "_____ the _____".

Question 2: [20 points]

This lesson gives some examples of design and orderliness in the universe. Give three examples of your own observation of design and orderliness in this universe.

Question 3: [15 points]

(a) The physical meaning of the fraction ½ is "one part out of two parts". What is the physical meaning of the fraction 1/0?

(b) Think about your answer in part (a). Is it possible? Relate your answer to the material you learnt in this lesson and then write one sentence that describes the essence of this lesson.

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LESSON 4

MORE ABOUT GOD

1. The Eternal Need for God

Examine the following examples, and then you will realize the extent to which the creatures of this world show the presence of a Creator.

1. How do those who construct airplanes work together to produce a plane? These specialized engineers assemble the body sections in a specific manner according to exact equations so that the plane may fly, carrying passengers and cargo. Of.course, the work of the construction engineers is to assemble the basic material according to their plans, in such a way that when their work is finished their activity ends. As for the engines, the electronic control systems, the interior setting and decor, etc., these do not depend upon the body constructors.
2. If we want to build a house and we are in possession of all the raw materials, is that sufficient? Surely, we need a builder and his workmen, not in order to produce the raw materials, but so as to put them together according to their craft. It is clear that we do not need the workmen for producing the materials used in the building, but that we need them only in so far as the use of these materials is concerned. In this way a house can be built from these materials.
3. A person who has never seen the Eiffel Tower can nevertheless construct it in his imagination in no time at all, merely from having heard about it. He can even construct it higher than it is, and imagine people climbing it.

   The existence of the Tower in the imagination is, as the previous two examples suggest, the work of the one who has imagined it. The basic materials of the plan and the house were not produced by their constructors, but all the materials for the imagined Tower were made by the one who imagined it, not obtained from some place or another. That is why their size is

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not dependent on the quality of raw material available, and it can be made larger according to the wish of the one who imagines it. We can see that imaginary forms derive their existence from ourselves. They remain in our minds as long as we want them to, and when we forget about them they become nothing again, and have no further existence in our imagination.

From this last example, we can conclude that anything whose existence depends on the existence of something else can not be independent, and at every moment has need of the other.

Now we can understand the condition of the created things of this world which have come into existence from nothing and which are the creation of God.

Are these created things, at every moment, in need of their creator? Some people may think that the created things of this world, after their creation, do not stand in need of their creator for their continued existence. However, this is a completely erroneous concept, because the things in the world are the effects and creations of God and are identical with the imagined forms which we ourselves can construct in our imaginations, in that at every moment they need the One who created them in order to continue existing.

In order to understand this better, imagine a human figure, speaking, walking and working according to his will. Does this figure have any independence? Clearly his existence is due to you, for if you cease to want him to exist, he will be annihilated and returned to nothingness.

This is the condition of the entire universe of creation which is completely from God, created by Him, and in no way independent. It is always in need of God. Also, if God ceased to will its existence, it would return to nothingness. The Qur'an says: *O men, you are the ones that need God; He is the All-sufficient, the All-laudable. If He will, He can put you away and bring a new creation.* (35:15-16)

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This is a subject to which Islam directs the attention of its followers. For example, it is instructed that in daily prayer when one rises one should say *"bi hawli 'l-lahi wa quwwatihi aqumu wa aq'ud* — with the power of Allah do I stand up and sit down."

2. God Occupies No Space

The world we see with our eyes is a material world composed of atoms. Every object has a special place and special properties, which vary from situation to situation. Distance plays a role in the action of these properties and the nearer the cause is to the effect the stronger the effect is; the further away it is, the weaker the effect, until a distance is reached where the cause has no action at all. To elucidate this point we shall give one or two examples.

(a) The power of a magnet is not the same at all distances: the nearer the metal is to the magnet, the stronger the power of attraction. If a nail is placed at a distance of two centimeters from a magnet, the attraction will be stronger than if it is placed at a distance of ten centimeters.

(b) The light of a lamp may reach a hundred meters, but within this distance the intensity is not uniform. The nearer to the lamp we are, the greater the intensity of its light.

These two examples show that all things which are situated in a certain place do not have an equal effect at all distance, the nearer we are to the center of something, the greater its effect will be, and vice versa.

Does God Have a Center?

Some people may possibly think that like the sun and other material things, God has a place and that He has a seat from which He exerts His influence over His creation. However, this is not the case, because His influence on creation, which is His own work, is the same in every place, from the depths of the oceans to the furthest parts of outer space. There is no place to which His influence does not reach in sufficiency. This influence is not such as has a center, such that the further we go from it the weaker it becomes, until we reach a point where there is no trace of his

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influence and chaos reigns. For if God had a place like other material things, His influence would vary throughout the universe. Therefore we can deduce from this that the Creator of this world has no location and no center. Indeed, God is the Creator of "place" and it is impossible that the Creator should be dependent on what He has created.

God cannot be compared with an inventor, because, as we explained previously, an inventor is not a creator. His only genius is that he understands the properties of things and is successful in bringing together certain elements to make something which, in some cases, he is himself in need of. But God, who is the Creator of all creation, is not in need of what He has created.

3. Is God Visible?

Now, since we have seen that God has no place, it is clear that he has no body either, because a body needs a place, and there can be no body which has no place. Since God has no body, he cannot be seen, because our eyes can see only bodies.

4. God is in Need of Nothing

Since God is the Creator of nourishment and other necessities of life and all things, we must agree that He has no need of any of these things. God, therefore, is the entire Truth who is in need of nothing. Unlike human beings, He does not need shelter, nourishment, and the other

necessities of life, rather all people and things are in need of Him.

* * *

Maybe you will now ask: "If God has no body, occupies no space and cannot be seen, then what is He and how can we say that He exists?"

To understand this, take the following example. We can say that electricity is neither solid, nor liquid, nor gas. These negations do not deny the existence of electricity, and it could never be true to say that because electricity is none of these things, therefore it

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does not exist. We have to admit that electricity is a fact which is not describable by any of the aforementioned conditions.

Now, when we say that God, the Self-Sufficient, has neither body, nor place, nor can He be seen, nor is He in need of anything, we mean that none of these imperfections can be found in the perfect, unlimited Being of God, who is the source of all existence. Here there can only be Perfection and Self-Sufficiency.

These properties distinguish His Being from other beings, and this is the God in Whom we must believe. Intelligence and human nature can accept such a God. No wise and honest person can deny His existence. The supremacy and glory of Islam can be seen when we compare this concept with the belief that God is on a level with man, having a body, children and other such attributes and appendages.

In fact, we might say that many materialists reject God because the true God has not been made known to them, and what they have considered is not the real God.

5. God's Omniscience

The grandeur and mystery of creation cannot be compared to a man-made machine. The infinite details seen in living beings and inanimate objects indicate the unlimited knowledge of God. Let us examine the following:

(a) Newton said that a study of the components of the ear and the eye would lead us to understand that the maker of the ear was thoroughly acquainted with the laws of acoustics, and that the maker of the eye was thoroughly acquainted with the laws of light and vision; a study of the heavenly bodies, he said, would lead us to understand the Truth which governs the universe.

(b) The physiology of the bat is full of amazing things. In order to be able to find its way in the dark without flying into obstacles, the animals sends out ultrasonic waves in front of itself rather like radar. If there is an obstacle in the way, the sound waves reach it and are reflected back, and thus the bat can steer clear of the obstacle.

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(c) Although insects are very small, they are very delicate and wonderful in their structure. For example, some of them, instead of eyes with one lens, have compound eyes made up of individual visual units called ommatids, every one of which has three parts: a cornea, a lens and a retina. The number of ommatids varies between insects. Glow-worms have about 2,500, but in others there can be between 10,000 and 28,000. Because insects cannot rotate their heads, they can be permitted, by these compound eyes, to see things which happen beside them or behind them

Now we must ask if God knows all the things after He has created them. And the answer is, yes, of course He does. God knows about things, whatever their place and whenever they happen. He is aware of the shinning of the furthest star in the highest heaven, of the tempestuousness of the foaming blue waves breaking on the furthest shores of the ocean, of the most mysterious hollows of the most remote valleys in the folds of the mountains, of the rustling of even one leaf in the gentle breeze, of the doleful coo of the owl in the deepest silence of the forest, of the flicker of the glow-worm among the leaves, of the innumerable fish with their infinite colours and variety in all the waters of the world, of the birth of the fawn of the honey-coloured gazelle in the depths of the forest, of the falling of the clear, pearly dew-drop from the petal of the half-opened rosebud in the recess of the rocks. He knows the height of the mountains, the covering of the sky, the expanse of the lands and the seas and the treasures of the mines, the hidden depths of the caves and of all and everything.

* * *

THE BASIS OF GOD'S KNOWLEDGE

He who creates and gives existence is aware of His creation and always attends to it, in the same way as we are not unaware of the forms we create in our own imaginations. As long as we wish them to exist, they remain in our minds, but when we turn our attention away from them, they cease to exist. If you imagine a person, you are necessarily aware of all his movements and his

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resting, and his actions are never hidden from your mind, because this imaginary person is your creation, that is, he did not exist before you thought of him, and you brought him into existence by your imagination.

God, who created the world and all of creation, whose existence comes from Him, oversees it all and is never unmindful of it. Of course, the difference between us, who imagine various forms in our minds, and God, who created the universe, is that we ourselves depend on God for our existence and that our existence comes from Him. However, God is independent of all things and has given existence to all things. It is for this reason that we call only Him the real Creator.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CREATOR & MAKER

The maker of a computer is not its creator and did not give it its existence; his only skill was that he gave a new' form to what was already in existence. He was not aware of the computations and the information that will be stored in it in the future. Similarly, other inventors, discoverers and artisans are not informed of all the minutiae of the movements and stillness of what they have made, because they have not given existence to them, they have not brought them from non-existence into existence. The raw materials were already in existence in the world. Only, by analysing and constructing, have they changed their form. Take the case of the airplane, which is made from raw materials in mines which were extracted, smelted and forged and made into the finished products.

Clearly, then, the makers did not create what they made; they only changed the form of the materials. For this reason, they are not permanently aware of their artifacts, and one cannot, therefore, properly call them creators. If, in some cases they have to be called creators, they have only been called so figuratively, not literally.

But God, Who has given existence to all things, is always aware and knowledgeable of their actions, because He is the real

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and true Creator. The Qur'an says, *"Shall He not know who created?"* (67:14)

Now we have understood that we ourselves and all the creatures of this world are not separated from the glorified presence of God. Wherever we are and to whatever land we travel, in the depths of the oceans, in the outer reaches of space, in the narrow places of the valleys, we are not hidden from Him. He sees the smallest of our good or bad deeds, and will reward and punish accordingly.

Can someone who has such a God and believes in Him ever fall prey to sin? Think about it.

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This lesson is based on the followings:
Dar Rah-e Haq Board, *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982.
It has been edited for this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 4
MORE ABOUT GOD

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [18 points]

Tick the appropriate box:

	TRUE	**FALSE**
(a) Imaginary forms derive their existence from the external world.		
(b) Independent existence implies self-sufficiency.		
(c) God's influence is uniform throughout the universe.		
(d) Men are capable of creating and destroying things in this universe.		
(e) God's influence on a person depends upon his faith.		
(f) Man can neither create nor destroy anything in this universe. He can only change the form, shape or size of things to suit his needs.		

Question 2: [12 points]

Describe four essential attributes of God.

Question 3: [20 points]

Explain the difference between us as the creator of our imagination and God as the Creator of this universe.

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LESSON 5

THE ONE & ONLY GOD

The advent of science has exposed for us a unique pattern of the universe. There was a time when the earth was considered to be the center of the universe, that it was stationary, and the heavenly bodies revolved around it. Then came a time when the people explored the solar system through the help of the telescope; and so, they gave the sun, the pride of place. Now we know that our solar system is but an insignificant family of planets at the edge of the huge galaxy which we call the Milky Way.

We see the moon rotating around the earth, like a happy child dancing brightly around its mother. There are eight other planets, besides our own earth, in the solar family; and five of them have satellites of their own. Mars and Neptune have two moons each; Jupiter has twelve moons and satellites; Saturn has nine and Uranus has five moons. All the moons and satellites rotate around their planets. And all these planets, in turn, rotate around the sun, which may be called the head of the family.

Now, let us trace back our steps before going further.

All these stars, planets, and satellites are made of atoms. And an atom itself is just a miniature solar system. Formerly, it was believed that atoms were immutable entities, i.e., they could not be divided. Now that atoms are known to have so many particles, the belief in their indestructibility has been shattered away. Atoms consist of a nucleus and a number of electrons. The nucleus is built from simple particles: neutrons and protons. The nucleus is located at the center of the atom and is surrounded by electrons. Electrons revolve around the nucleus in a fixed orbit much like our solar system. It should be mentioned here, to make the picture more clear, that the nucleus of an atom is a particle of very small radius, but of exceedingly great density. In plain words, all the atomic mass (except a negligible fraction) is concentrated in the nucleus, while the size of the nucleus is less than one hundred thousandth of the size of an atom. And don't forget that more than 100,000,000

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atoms can be put side by side in one centimeter. Now, as we have stated earlier, the atom is a world in itself. The protons and neutrons behave as though they were rotating around their own axis, like rotating tops. Their spin suggests the idea of an internal rotation.

Thus, we see that there is a single pattern of operation, right from the smallest sub-atomic particles to the mighty solar system.

But this is not the end of the story.

As we know, the sun, together with its family, is placed on the brink of the *Milky* Way. "If we could view the Milky Way from a vast distance and see it as a whole, we should observe a rather flat wheel of stars with spiral arms — something like the sparks of a Catherine wheel." It consists of many millions of separate stars like our sun. This system of stars is physically connected by gravitational forces and moves through space as a whole. It is called a Galaxy.

If we think that our solar system is a family of stars, a galaxy may be called a very big tribe consisting of millions and millions of such families.

The multitude of galaxies were unknown in the past. By about 1920 it was thought that there were at least 500,000 galaxies. Now, with the advent of powerful telescopes this number had risen to 100,000,000, and is increasing day by day. So far as the eyes of cameras and telescopes can see, there are clusters and clusters of galaxies.

Human knowledge, at present, is in its infancy. Nobody knows what is beyond these galaxies. Nor do we know much about the nature of their movement. The Qur'an says, "God has decorated the nearest sky with these lamps (i.e., stars)." So we know that until now, we have not seen the end of even the first sky. And who knows what wonders are hidden beyond the first sky! "You have not been given knowledge but a little."

So, let us confine our talk to the little that we know about. We know that the particles of atoms are rotating around their axis;

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satellites are rotating around their planets; planets are rotating around their stars; and stars along with their dependent families, are rotating in the galaxies.

Our faith in monotheism, the Unity or Oneness of God, is the purest in the world. We have given countless proofs for our belief in the last fourteen centuries. Now science has opened a new path, which, also leads to the belief in the Unity of God. It may be described briefly, in these words: "The uniform pattern of the universe is an indisputable proof that all this has been made by one, and only one, Creator."

When we see two identical watches, we need not be told that they were made in the same factory. On the same ground, when we see the entire universe woven into a single entity; all its components governed by the same laws; all its parts operating on the same pattern, our natural instinct guides us to believe that it is created, made and controlled by ONE and only ONE Creator.

And, remember, there is a great difference between watches and the universe. Watches may be imitated or duplicated by impostors and forgerers. But, as the scientists say, [a]by definition there is only one universe. One cannot repeat it or do experiments with it." So, we need not bother ourselves with the thought of any imitation-gods. If the universe —the creation— cannot be more than one, how can God —the Creator— be more than one?

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This lesson is entirely based on chapter 18 of Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi's God *of Islam,* Dar-es-salaam, 1970. It has been slightly summarized and edited to suit this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 5
THE ONE & ONLY GOD

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [20 points]

(a) Is it preferable to work under one boss or several bosses?

(b) Comment on the situation when a person works under two supervisors and each gives him conflicting orders.

Question 2: [20 points]

One of the examples of uniformity and consistency in this universe is that in Toronto the longest and the shortest days fall exactly on the same day every year since time immemorial. Give two more such examples from your own observation.

Question 3: [10 points]

Describe in your own words the scientific evidence that points to the existence of only One God.

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LESSON 6

TAWHID & SIFAT

1. *Tawhid*—Monotheism

The corner-stone of Islamic beliefs is *tawhid,* the belief in Unity or Oneness of God which is also known as monotheism. Tawhid is the first part of the *kalimah*—the formula of faith in Islam. It says:

La ilaha il-lal Iah

There is no god but Allah.

"Allah" is the proper name of God in Islam. The word "Allah" means "One who deserves to be loved" and "in Whom everyone seeks refuge." This word, grammatically speaking is unique. It has no plural and no feminine. So this name itself reflects light upon the fact that God is one and only one; He has neither any partner nor any equal. The name cannot be adequately translated by the word "God" because God can be transformed into "gods" and "goddess".

* * *

The Message of *Tawhid:*

The first part of the *kalimah* consists of two statements: A negative statement ("There is no god") and a positive ("but Allah").

The negative statement leads a Muslim throughout his life not only in religious matters but also in social affairs. "There is no god" shows a Muslim that nothing in the universe is superior to him. It is observed in the Qur'an that *He is the One who created for you all that is in the earth.* So a Muslim knows that nothing in this world is to be worshipped. Neither stone nor trees, neither animals nor human beings, neither the Sun, the Moon, nor the stars can be worshipped, because everything is created for his benefit.

When a Muslim thus rejects every falsehood and every idea of nature-worship, idol-worship and human-worship, he is ready to believe in the positive truth of *tawhid.* Believing in a Supreme Being gives an aim to our life and provides a purpose for our

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actions. Had man been left with the wrong impression that there was no God at all, his life would have been aimless, and an aimless life is dangerous. So it is added that there is no god "but Allah".

The *kalimah* of *tawhid* has a negative and a positive aspect. Both are instrumental in creating the belief that every person is equal to every other person. When nobody is superior, nobody is inferior. Thus, the belief in tawhid promotes the sense of brotherhood and equality and equity which is another feature of Islam.

2. Sifat—the Attributes of God

In the preceding lessons, we have learnt about most of the important attributes of God. There are many attributes which are a must for God, while there are others which are beneath His dignity and, therefore, cannot be found in Him.

The attributes of God, therefore, have been grouped into "positive" and "negative": the former reflects the attributes that exist in Him, where as the latter reflect the attributes that cannot be found in Him. The positive attributes of God are known as *as-sifat ath-thubutiyyah;* whereas the attributes that cannot be found in God are known as *as-sifat as-salbiyyah.*

(A) THE POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES *(AS-SIFAT ATH-THUBUTIYYAH):*

There are many attributes which are befitting Allah, but only eight are usually mentioned because of their importance. The eight *as-sifat ath-thubutiyyah* are as follows:

1. Eternal *(al-Qadim):* God has neither a beginning nor an end.
2. Omnipotent *(al-Qadir):* God is Omnipotent; He has power over every thing and every affair.
3. Omniscient (al-'Alim): God is Omniscient; He knows every thing. Even our unspoken intentions and unexpressed desires are not hidden from Him.
4. Living *(al-Hayy):* God is always Alive and will remain Alive for ever.

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5. Will Power *(al-Murid):* God has His own will and discretion in all affairs. He does not do anything under compulsion.

6. All-Perceiving *(al-Mudrik):* God is All-Hearing and All-Seeing; He can see and hear everything without any need of eyes and ears.

7. Master of Speech *(al-Mutakallim):* God can create speech in anything, as He did in a tree for Prophet Musa (a.s.) and in the curtain of light for our holy Prophet (a.s.).

8. Truthful *(as-Sadiq):* God is always true in His words and promises.

It is impossible to fix any limit to the attributes of God. This list is not exhaustive but is essential to understand the glory of Allah. These attributes are not acquired but are inherent in the concept of Divinity.

(B) THE NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES *(As-SiFAr AS-SALBIYYAH)*

The term "negative attributes" means those attributes which cannot be found in God because they are incompatible with the concept of Divinity. Similar to the positive attributes, the negatives attributes are also many but only eight are normally listed because of their importance. The eight *as-sifdt as-salbiyyah* are as follows:

1. Partner *(as-Sharik):* God has no partner or colleague.

2. Compound *(al-Murakkab):* God is neither made nor composed of any material. He cannot be divided even in imagination.

3. Place (*al-Makdn):* God has neither a center nor a place because He has no body; and He is everywhere because His power and knowledge is magnificently apparent everywhere.

4. Incarnation *(al-Hulul):* God does not enter into anything or any person, nor does anything enter Him. Therefore, the belief in incarnation is incompatible with the concept of Divinity.

5. Change *(Mahall-e Hawadith):* God is not subject to change.

6. Visible *(al-Mar'i):* God is not visible; He has not been seen, is not seen, and will never be seen.

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7. Need *(Ihtiyaj):* God is not deficient in any virtue, so He does not need anything. He is free from want.
8. "Acquired Attribute' *(Sifat-e Za'id):* The attributes of Allah are not separate from His person. When we say that God is Omnipotent and Merciful, we do not mean that his power and mercy are something different from His person.

To understand the concept of 'additional quality' or 'acquired attribute' more clearly, read the following two sentences: "Tea is sweet" and "Sugar is sweet". In the first example, sweetness is an additional quality for tea; the tea was not sweet when it was made, it became sweet after sugar was added to it. But in the second example, sweetness is an essential quality not an added quality for sugar; the sugar was sweet from the day it became a sugar; a "sugar" which is not sweet is not sugar at all. The positive attributes of God are like sweetness is to sugar; they are not additional to the person of God. Power, mercy, knowledge, justice, virtue, truth, etc. were never separate from His person.

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This lesson is entirely based on chapter 26 & 27 of Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi's God *of Islam,* Dar-es-salaam. 1970. It has been compiled and edited to suit this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 6
TAWHID & SIFAT

Name: _____ *Student No.* _____

Question 1: [10 points]

What is the uniqueness of the word "Allah"?

Question 2: [10 points]

(a) Which part of the *kalimah* tells a Muslim that it is humiliating for him to worship inanimate objects?

(b) Describe in your own words how the *kalimah* instills a sense of dignity, equality, justice and brotherhood among Muslims.

Question 3: [24 points]

From the attributes of God listed below, circle those that **cannot** be found in God.

1. Gracious.	2. Resident.	3. Incarnation.
4. Almighty.	5. Creator.	6. Just.
7. Visible.	8. Divisible.	9. Partner.
10. Overwhelming.	11. Inventor.	12. Compound.
13. Subject to change.	14. Eternal.	15. Forgiving.
16. Merciful.	17. Vengeful.	18. Protector.
19. Everlasting.	20. All-Knowing.	

Question 4: [6 points]

Explain in your own words the concept of “additional quality” and why this attribute is incompatible with the concept of Divinity.

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LESSON 7

THE JUSTICE OF GOD

1. God's Justice

From previous lessons we have read and learned that:

1. The order, design and harmony in the universe in general and in the human body in particular are veritable witness to the existence of a Creator whom we call God.

2. The same order, design and harmony also shows the Omniscience and Omnipotence of the Creator; but at the same time, due to our limitation, we cannot fully encompass the extent of His wisdom, knowledge and power.

3. Unlike the perpetual need of all creation, God is the Absolutely Needless and He stands in need of nothing. We also came to know that He does not occupy any space or center, nor is He visible.

* * *

Now we may ask if it is possible for God to be unjust? We know that injustice stems from ignorance, need, weakness or similar causes, none of which can exist in God. If we seek to find the cause of injustice, we may find the following reasons:

1. Ignorance:

People sometimes commit injustice out of ignorance. At times, injustices stem out of man's limited and finite knowledge. For example, a judge can unjustly pass a sentence against an innocent person because he does not know the truth or because the truth was hidden from him.

2. Need:

Injustice sometimes takes place when a person cannot get what he needs by proper means.

3. Weakness or Compulsion:

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Sometimes, people commit injustice because of weakness and compulsion. For example, after much struggling, when a person cannot get his rights from an unjust person, he is, sometimes, led to extremes and does anything he can to bring that person down.

The deprivation of that person becomes a pretext for violence and crime.

These and similar causes of injustice are impossible for God, because He is Omniscient, Free from need, and Omnipotent. So He is incapable of any injustice. This is a very clear and obvious matter. Those who doubt the justice of God have not considered what we have explained, or else they do not understand what justice is.

2. What is Justice?

Justice is that every person's rights should be respected, that no distinction should be made between people for no reason. For example, in a school examination, all those who have a certain mark can move up to next grade. Thus, the principal cannot make any distinction among the students and allow some of them to proceed to the next class while depriving others of this right while their marks are the same—because creating such a distinction among students who have the same right of entry into the higher class constitutes an act of injustice.

But in a situation where the question of rights does not arise, discrimination between individuals cannot be counted as injustice. For example, if someone wishes to invite some deprived persons to a meal, and chooses only some of these unfortunates, his act does not constitute injustice—because here there are no rights which are being violated. What is given to them is only given in order to help them and purely out of a sense of doing good.

The observance of equality and justice is necessary when all have the same right; but when no rights exist, there can be no discussion of equality and justice, and discrimination between two individuals in such cases cannot be called injustice.

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Thus, those who find difficulty in understanding the creation of things, and ask why God has not created all people equal and without distinction, and why He does not behave towards everyone with equal measure, have actually not understood the real meaning of justice. If God does not create anyone at all or if He distinguishes between beings, nobody's rights have been violated, and therefore we can say that there is

no injustice in spite of the differences and variations we find among human beings.

However, since God is Omniscient and Wise, and does nothing without a good purpose, we can ask: What is the reason for the distinctions among human beings? Are the differences necessary in the order of things?

3. The Vicissitudes in the Life of Man

Certainly you have heard of the spacecraft "Apollo", a perfect example of the marvelous progress man has made in science and technology. It took man above the clouds, beyond the atmosphere, and allowed him to set his feet on the surface of the moon, thus opening the door to a world hitherto unknown to him.

Looking at the design of this spacecraft, we see a huge mass of nuts and bolts, large and small, and various delicate and complex instruments; the command module, the main craft, the lunar landing module, landing and take-off equipment, fuel tanks, telecommunication and navigational apparatus, power sources, safety devices and sufficient stores of food, water and other necessities. Each of these parts has its own role. Obviously, if it were not for these various parts, Apollo would never have come into existence, and it would not have been able to overcome the difficulties facing man on his way to the moon.

This example shows us that in a whole whose parts are connected with each other and in harmony, variety cannot be avoided.

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Now let us look at the world of existence to discover that diversity here is neither pointless nor without reason. Without doubt, the beauty and complexity of this world is due to the variety of its parts, and we cannot call this diversity meaningless or unjust.

We have shown above that injustice exists where distinction is made when all have the same right to use something equally. However, the parts of the world had no existence before they were created, and so they had no pre-existent rights which would enable us to say that the distinctions between them constitutes an injustice. In fact, the world of creation owes its existence to variety, and if there had not been any variety there would not have been any universe, there would have been just one big uniformity. It was this variety that brought into existence atoms, solar systems, galaxies, trees, plants and animals.

Turning now towards variety in human life, we see that diversity in man is not an exception to this general principle of variety. If we look at the diversity in human ability, intelligence and memory and ask why they are not the same in all humans, we must first ask why plants and minerals do not have these superior faculties. Then we can see that neither of these questions can be properly discussed, because such questions can only arise when rights are being trampled on. In this case, neither of these two conditions existed prior to creation such that a distinction between them should be seen as an injustice.

* * *

Another point to notice is that God demands from everyone according to his ability and responsibility, and no one is asked to do more than his bodily and mental powers enable him. This is justice itself.

For example, if a principal gives the examination of the most advanced class to one of the lower classes, this is an act of injustice. However, if he gives the easy questions to the lower class and the difficult questions to the advanced class, then no one can complain that there had been injustice. Instead, he would be regarded as just by any meaning of the word.

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Therefore, if all existent things are regarded from the same point of view and their responsibilities were all the same, then to make a distinction as regards their creation would be an act of injustice. But we know that responsibilities are proportional to the individual's capabilities, and thus there is no injustice. For example, if a small screw in a machine has to do the same work as the largest cog, there would be injustice; but if each part must work according to its design and possibilities, then there is no injustice.

Moreover, we believe that God is Wise and that He does not do anything for no reason or for no good purpose, and we believe that the world has a special design so that no speck can come into existence without reckoning or design. If, in such cases, something appears useless or without a function, it is in fact because of the limited nature of our minds. Not knowing something does not mean that it does not exist.

We can conclude from this that all the variations in things have some good purpose, and that they are all perfectly useful and necessary in the system of the universe, although we may not be able to understand this by our restricted thinking.

* * *

It may be objected that all individuals may have the same characteristics, talents and abilities, but that because of the needs of society they are forced to divide their labour among themselves. The answer to this is that if this were the case, those who seek an easy life would choose the easier occupation, and the difficult and laborious occupations and menial tasks would be left with no one to do them; for no one would be ready to do them, since they all think the same way.

The spirit of man must pass through various states in order to obtain moral perfection. Gradually, calmly and without haste, through facing difficulties and comforts, tasting the bitter and the sweet, his spirit becomes more perfect.

It is these ups and downs that teach man to acquire pleasure; sometimes he is the king of the castle, and sometimes he is thrown

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into the dungeons. Happy is the one who uses whatever situation he finds himself in to perfect his soul. If he is well-off, he can follow the way of perfection by helping the poor and the orphans, thus acquiring a great, humanitarian spirit, although he could be using his riches for easy living and luxury without putting them to any spiritual use.

Similarly, if he is poor, instead of encroaching upon other people's property and rights, he can be contented with his lot, be patient and cultivate self-respect, thus rolling away the stone of life's difficulties with the hand of activity and patience. Thus all the vicissitudes of life are ways to perfection, and we must follow this way, whether the passage is narrow or wide.

Our meaning is not that we should will upon ourselves difficulties and sufferings. It is clear that this would be very difficult because we would not be using the natural abilities that God has bestowed upon us. What we mean is that, if we try our best, but do not reach our objective or fall from prosperity to hardship, we should not consider ourselves to be unfortunate. Rather, we should regard the vicissitudes, ease and difficulty, as new fields for the building of our souls and the use of our minds in resistance and struggle against these difficulties. In this way, we can derive the greatest benefit for our spiritual strength. One who acts thus does not find in life anything against the principles of justice and purpose, and everywhere he turns he finds victory and prosperity. In this respect, the Qur'an says: *He has raised some of you in rank above others, that He may try you in what He has given you.* (6:165)

The meaning of the words ‘that He may try you’ here is that we should use to our benefit the present moment, and so, whatever situation happens to man, it is for his spiritual development, and this is the Grace and Justice of God.

This is the philosophy of differences and vicissitudes which can never be in contradiction to Justice. If we fail to understand some of the world's events we should not consider them to be unjust and wrong, because the system of creation is built firmly by

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the Powerful hands of the One with whom there can be no injustice, and all that He demands from us is through His Love.

This is a fact that we have clearly observed many times in the things which have happened to us and to others. Sometimes we consider something to be bad, but after a while we realize that not only was it without harm, but that it was also positively beneficial. The Qur'an says: *Yet it may happen that you will hate a thing which is better for you; and it may happen that you will love a thing which is worse for you. Allah* knows *and you know not.* (2:216)

This lesson is based on the followings: Dar Rah-e Haq Board, *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982. It has been compiled and edited for this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 7
THE JUSTICE OF GOD

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [2 points for each correct statement]

Circle the letter of two correct statements:

(a) Injustice stems out of arrogance.

(b) Injustice means physically harming other person.

(c) Injustice can be defined as removing something from its proper place.

(d) Injustice is an act of making distinction when all have equal rights.

(e) Injustice can be defined as not treating everybody equally.

Question 2: [10 points]

Explain in your own words the correct meaning of *injustice* and the real meaning *of Justice.*

Question 3: [2 points for each correct answer]

Fill in the blanks with words from the pool of words given below by simply placing the number of the correct word in the blank space.

(a) The beauty and complexity of the universe is due to the _ things and ___ of creation.

(b) This universe is a huge, gigantic machine whose parts ___ ___ and _____ are performing their designated ___ .

(c) If no _____ are violated, no ___ occurs.

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(d) No one in this universe is asked to do _____ than what one is _____ of doing.

(e) Since God is Wise, He does not create anything without a __ good ___.

(f) Without diversity and variety, this universe will be a dreadful.

(g) Justice means responsibilities should be ___ to capability.

I. rights 2. proportional 3. reason 4. injustice 5. more

6. variety 7. purpose 8. capable 9. *small 10. diversity*

II. large 12. uniformity 13. function

Question 3: [10 points]

The Qur'anic verse "So *that He may try us in what He has given us"* means:

(a) He would like to see how we conduct ourselves in a given situation.

(b) He may test us by giving us certain things.

(c) He wants us to perfect ourselves morally by dealing patiently and strongly with whatever situation we are facing.

(d) In happiness or sorrow, our objective remains the pleasure of God.

(e) He subjects some people to greater difficulties than others.

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LESSON 8

PROPHETS & HUMAN GUIDANCE

1. The Purpose of Life

Did God create man as part of the chain of reproduction, to be a cog in a machine, and to be counted only as an automaton? Was man created only for his own enjoyment? Was he created only to amass as much wealth as possible through any means, direct or devious, so as to satisfy his material wants? Is there no greater idea behind His creation?

A large number of people regard only man's material aspect and neglect the other side of the coin, because they have not understood the profundity of the nature of man or because they have not correctly evaluated it. Men of great understanding have ascribed three dimensions to man:

1. Individual material dimension.
2. Social dimension.
3. Spiritual dimension.

Those who give importance only to the first dimension, overlook the profound character of man and have thus forgotten the other two important dimensions. Those who land importance to the first two dimensions, but neglect the third, only succeed in creating an environment devoid of any spiritual and moral values.

Arnold Toynbee, the famous British historian, in a long interview with *Life* magazine, said that man had submitted himself to materialism and that from that point of view we do not lack anything. However, he said, we have become bankrupt on the spiritual side of things. There is still time, he said, to address this problem and return to religion.

So a serious thinker goes further than the first two dimensions, and studies the purpose of life from all three dimensions. The third dimension gives man the power to evaluate his entrances and exits on the stage of personal and social dimensions. Man can reach

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perfection only by making his way through various dimensions — he must find this way, for it is the purpose of his creation.

2. Human Conscience

The question now arises of whether man's conscience alone can lead him through these dimensions. Let us begin to analyse this problem with description of human conscience itself.

Most people would agree that within the depth of man's nature, there is a power which can distinguish good from bad. This power is known as human conscience.

We do not deny that society has an influence on deciding what is good and evil: for example, dress, food and other similar things may be good at one time and place, and bad in others. Such values are the result of a particular society's view-point. However, there are certain values — good as well as evil — which are of universal nature; they are not confined to one time, place or society. For example, trustworthiness, helping the poor and the weak, working for humanity, and justice. These are considered as good values deeply rooted in the nature of man. Likewise, cheating, selfishness, and injustice are considered as bad at all times and in all places. Such universal values prove the existence of human conscience.

Can conscience alone guide us to perfection through the three dimensions of life? Conscience by itself cannot guide man completely — it needs training. Human conscience is like minerals in the earth which must be extracted and refined. Otherwise, it may be perverted and rendered useless under the influence of a corrupt social environment. Every person is familiar with the situations where he himself or a fellow human being has suppressed the voice of his conscience and given in to his evil desires.

3. Human Intelligence

From the early stages of history, man has been putting forward many ideas for the improvement of human society. But to this day, he has failed to present a plan which would satisfy all requirements of human nature. This is due to the finite nature of our knowledge about the material as well as the spiritual world.

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Even when man has put forward a good idea, there is no guarantee that it will be implemented properly. On the individual level, for example, many intelligent and knowledgeable people know the harm of alcoholism, gambling and crime, but nevertheless they fall victims to such practices. On the social and collective level, we have the example of the United Nations Organization with over 150 member countries. But it is a weak world body whose resolutions generally remain merely in the minutes and only on paper. This shows clearly that human intelligence and knowledge are no guarantee for action.

4. The Divine Guidance

Human conscience and intelligence alone are not enough to guide us to the perfection in the three dimensions of life mentioned above. The Divine guidance is the answer: it comes from the unlimited source of knowledge which has no room for error, and its implementation is comparatively more guaranteed because of the dire consequences in the hereafter from which no one can escape.

Conscience and intelligence, with confirmation from the Divine guidance, can help man to reach felicity without danger of corruption or diversion. Imam 'Ali (a.s.) said,

> Then God sent His messengers and prophets to mankind to make them fulfill the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and show them the signs of His Omnipotence.

The Need for Prophets & Messengers:

We can conclude from the above that:

- the aim of life is to achieve perfection in individual, social and spiritual dimensions;
- human conscience alone is not enough to guide man to perfection;

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- human intelligence alone also does not satisfactorily guide man to formulate a plan to achieve the purpose of life;
- prophets and messengers have been sent to guide human beings to fulfill the purpose of life on this earth by nurturing their conscience and intellectual power, and also by providing a more stronger guarantor of implementing the Divine plan.

Through these four points, we discover that the prophets are necessary for the perfection of mankind, and that they were sent to inform human beings of what they require in the way of perfection so that they may tread the path of happiness. One cannot imagine that the Wise God could leave man without instructions and laws, or that He could leave them without guidance so that they may become victims of human desires and be prevented from reaching perfection.

The Distinctions of the Divine Guidance:

The Divine guidance is not concerned with one dimension of life only. God sent messengers and prophets to guide people in order to reach perfection in the material as well as the spiritual dimensions of life. The prophets and messengers have guided us in spiritual plane as well as in politics, in justice as well as in economy, in personal problems as well as in social responsibilities.

The Divine guidance is not restricted to one class of society; it encompasses all levels of people and upholds the rights of all. This belies the claim of those who think that religion was invented by the wealthy class, and that it was invented in feudal and capitalist societies to serve their interest. Moreover, history bears witness that the upper and wealthy classes did not participate in the movements led by the prophets, and that Divine religions always opposed the oppression of feudalists and capitalists.

5. Role of Miracles in Prophethood

When man realizes that he needs the guidance of prophets in order to achieve the purpose of life, he naturally feels affection for the prophets and messengers who work for his benefit and who sacrifice their lives for his advantage. This affection reaches a

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degree where people are willing to bear any hardship to advance the aims of the prophets; and they start preferring the commands of the prophets to their own desires.

This strong love and affection of the people for prophets of God, and the tremendous power and influences which the prophets gain has caused some ambitious persons to claim prophethood in order to advance their own interest.

So, if someone claims prophethood, one cannot believe in him without some investigation. For it is possible that he falsely proclaims prophethood, as many people have indeed done so up to the present day. In order to find out if someone is a genuine prophet, the latter must bring some evidence so that people can be sure of him and accept his claim. Thus the real prophets can be distinguished from the pretenders. This evidence is known as miracles.

What are Miracles?

Miracles *(mu'jizah)* are what the prophets did according to the will of God in order to prove the truth of their claim of prophethood, and which others are unable to copy.

This purpose of miracles makes it very clear as to why at times the Prophet did not accede to demands for more miracles. Some people, who had already seen miracles, demanded various things from the prophets as miracles not with the desire to follow the truth but to find an excuse for not believing. They even asked for things that were logically impossible. However, since the prophets brought enough miracles, they did not accede to such demands. Miracles are done according to the will of God and in situations where they are necessary.

The Qur'an says, *Say, "The signs are only with God, and I am only a plain warner."* (29:50) *It is not for any Messenger to bring a sign, except by God's permission.* (?:78)

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This lesson is based on the following: Dar Rah-e Haq Board, *The Roots of Religion,* Qum 1982. It has been compiled and edited extensively to suit the purpose of this course by S.M. Rizvi.

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Question Paper on Lesson 8
PROPHETS & HUMAN GUIDANCE

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [20 points]

Tick the appropriate box:

TRUE FALSE

(a) The purpose of our creation is to serve humanity.

(b) Social dimension of our life is related to our attitude towards other members of the society.

(c) The purpose of our creation is to achieve perfection by observing the limits imposed by our spiritual dimension upon our material and social dimensions.

(d) Human conscience is sufficient to guide human beings to perfection.

(e) Perfection means submitting to the will of God to the extent that the individual's will merges with God's will.

(f) Conscience is a power within every human being that identifies the good and the evil.

(g) Prophets must perform miracles when demanded to prove their truthfulness.

(h) Human intelligence and knowledge can guarantee the implementation of good ideas.

(i) Prophets were sent to train human conscience and intelligence towards perfection.

(j) A miracle that is beyond human capacity distinguishes a real prophet from an imposter.

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Question 2: [10 points]

What is the function of human conscience? Explain, with an example, how conscience identifies universal good and evil values.

Question 3: [10 points]

Describe at least two reasons why Divine guidance is needed and why prophets and messengers were sent.

Question 4: [10 points]

How would you distinguish a real prophet from an imposter? What kind of miracle would you expect from a real prophet?

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LESSON 9

THE PURITY OF THE PROPHETS

1. Why must the Prophets be Ma'sum?

The Wise and Merciful God sent the prophets so that human society may recognise the right way as opposed to the precipitous way, and may be able to stride up to the highest peaks of true pride, perfection and laudable virtues, and stay on that way.

With the same intention, God also made His prophets and messengers immune from every kind of sin and error, and, in one word, made them "infallible" *(ma'sum),* so that they may be able to lead mankind towards God without any error or mistake.

It is obvious that the very same reason which prompted the need for prophethood also requires that the prophets be immaculate and immune from all kinds of sin, impurity, error and fault. Since the aim and purpose of sending prophets is to lead society towards God's commands, this aim is to be secured through the infallibility of the prophets, for it is clear that to do things which are repulsive or indecent, to sin, and also to be a source of error and fault is a reason for people to be averse to and diverted from these things, and thus the aim, which was the guidance and teaching of society, would be lost.

Of course, we know that no wise person does things against his aim, and that he takes regard for what is effectual in attaining and reaching his aim. For example, someone who wants a number of distinguished individuals to take part in a celebration in his honour knows that no one without an invitation can honourably attend. He will never send an invitation to someone who is averse to him, rather he will try to send his invitations in such a way that they will all be accepted, and, if he doesn't do this, his work will not have been prudent and wise, and it will be regarded as having been unseemly and unbecoming.

The Merciful and Wise God also takes account of what basically interferes with the guidance and education of society, and

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does not want people to depend on and follow the will of capricious and impure men, and so to end up far from, and be deprived of their true development. Therefore, He has sent immaculate prophets so that the guidance and instruction of society may be in the best possible way.

And now we shall read in more detail why the prophets must be without fault. —

(A) THE PRINCIPLE OF INSTRUCTION:

The purpose of sending the prophets was to educate humanity; and we know that in education, the teacher's behaviour is a more effective instrument than his speech and verbal instructions.

The character and actions of the teacher can bring about a radical transformation in man, because, on the basis of the principle of imitation, man gradually adopts the manner and conduct of his teacher, and becomes of the same colour so that it is as if he is the clear, limpid surface of a pool which reflects the image of the sky above him.

Speech alone cannot play the part of instruction, rather it serves instruction, and this is the idea of the prophetic mission, that prophets must possess praiseworthy habits and qualities and be untainted with sin and error so that they can effectively attract the people of this world towards the sacred aim.

It is clear that one who has soiled his hands with sin, even though in secret and without anyone being aware, will never have that unwavering strength of mind and spirit to bring about a radical transformation in the area of the human spirit. For example, a person who taints his lips with wine can never dissuade others from drinking it, and raise the voice of truth and mobilise his iron will in combating this act.

The secret of the prophets' success in their mission was the coordination in their words and deeds, and it is this moral strength which enabled them to transform the fundamentals of human thoughts and lead societies towards perfection.

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(B) CONFIDENCE & ACCEPTANCE:

The greater the degree of faith and confidence that people have in a speaker, the more their agreement with him increases, and vice versa. For this reason, the prophets, who divulged the Divine commands and restrained people from sin and immorality, must, according to this assertion, be endowed with the greatest, most admirable qualities, and be free from every kind of sin and indecency, every error and mistake. This is so that people's confidence and faith in them may be greater and they may accept their guidance and what they say, and so that people may strive more assiduously in carrying out the plans and putting into practice the reformative instructions of the prophets, and understand from the depths of their hearts their leadership.

Thus the aim of the prophetic mission, that is to say the leading of the human race to development on all sides, will be accomplished; the aim of the prophetic mission will not be obtained under any other circumstances, and that would be very far from the wisdom of God.

This purity and worthiness of the prophets was so extraordinary that people became devoted to them to such a degree that their followers felt great love towards them and gave up their lives in following and obeying them, without heed for the consequences.

However, the question as to how one man can be completely free from sin and error is a matter to which we shall now turn our attention.

2. How can a person be *Ma'sum?*

(A) REAL LOVE OF GOD:

The holy prophets were deeply devoted to God, and why should they not have been? They, who with their senses and profound insight knew God better than anyone, who understood His Greatness, Splendour and Majesty to be above all things, who deem Him alone worthy of love, devotion and obedience, who had nothing except His Pleasure in view, who gave their hearts to none

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but Him, who did everything with devotion to Him, and who knew Who they were worshipping.

It was for this very reason that the prophets welcomed difficulties and formidable situations, and also paid attention to God with smiling, open faces even when they were in the most critical circumstances. And so, when, in their beloved, true way, they met with difficulties, they became overflowing with joy.

History has recorded the endeavours of these heavenly, torch-bearing men of guidance, as also the condemnable behaviour of people towards them. Could steadfastness in these difficulties have had another motivation apart from love of God and the performance of His command? Surely not.

How can it be imagined that those who are completely engrossed in their beloved way, and who utter nothing except according to His wish, and in whose heart, soul, spirit and thoughts not one corner is empty of remembrance of Him, can disobey His commands? Or can give themselves up to sin? Rather, they followed the path of obedience to Him and were devoted to Him.

Someone asked the Prophet of Islam, why he himself indulged in worship of God to such an extent that he would physically suffer since he was purified and had no sins. His answer was that why should he not be a grateful and thankful slave of God?[3] So it was not out of fear of punishment that the Prophet used to worship God to such an extent, it was out of a sense of gratitude.

Thus we can understand that the perfect knowledge of the prophets and the deep and true love which they had for God resulted in infallibility and absolute purity, so that, in addition to precluding sin from their will and thinking, they withheld themselves from sin.

(B) THE DEEP & PERFECT INSIGHT OF THE PROPHETS:

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[3] *Nuru 'th-Thaqalayn,* vol. 3. p. 367.

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Perceptiveness is not the same in everyone. Someone who is ignorant and illiterate will never think like a doctor does about microbes and the contamination of vessels by them. A doctor who has spent years investigating microbes, has watched them multiply under a microscope, and has witnessed the fate of those who were infected by them can never neglect microbes and their dangers.

Thus we see that the ignorant person proceeds to drink water contaminated with microbes and has no worry, whereas the doctor would never be prepared to drink such water and would never even entertain the idea.

The only motive for refraining from drinking is the knowledge and information which this doctor has concerning the bad effects of microbes. So, for example, the illiterate, ignorant person would also keep himself from eating something filthy, for, in this case, he is aware of the impurity and harmful effects of it. But a one year old child into whose reach that filthy thing falls would probably put it into his mouth.

Another point is that there are some people who attach little importance to incremental harm, although they fear sudden, unexpected dangers and avoid them. For example, someone may be rather lazy about extracting a decayed tooth and may procrastinate about resorting to a dentist, till such time as his other teeth become affected, and a great deal more discomfort comes his way. The toll for this is that he may be affected by very serious ailments. However, the very same person, as soon as the pain of appendicitus appears and there is a possibility of real danger, will entrust himself into the hands of a surgeon without any delay.

Ordinary people take a superficial view of evil, and do not take sufficient note of its physical and spiritual, bodily and psychological effects.

However, the prophets, who, with the help of a higher power, have supremacy in their vision and knowledge over the rest of mankind, who have a profound and perfect insight into all the effects of evil, and who, by a secret witnessing, see even those effects of evil which will materialize in the next world, will never

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come under the influence of their own bodily desires and soil their hands with the contamination of sin; even the thought of it will never enter their hearts.

In short, remembrance of judgment and the preview of the effects of sin in the next world was the best way to keep the prophets from sin and indecency.

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This lesson is based on the following: Dar Rah-e Haq, *The Roots of Religion* (1981) Qum, Iran.

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Question Paper on Lesson 9
THE PURITY OF THE PROPHETS

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [16 points]

Fill in the blanks from the pool of words given below by simply placing the number of the correct word in the blank space.

(a) A teacher's conduct undoubtedly ——— his students' ———.

(b) For greatest impact, a prophet must instill ——— in his followers.

(c) It was their true ___ and real ___ of God that made prophets free from sins and impurities.

(d) The reason why prophets refrained from committing sins was that they could _____. the effects of evil deeds.

(e) The prophetic mission required prophets to demonstrate extremely high ____ character and ethical _____.

1 *foresee* 2. *love* 3. *standards* 4. *character 5. moral*
6. *affects* 7. *knowledge* 8. *confidence*

Question 2: [10 points]

Tick the appropriate box:

	TRUE	**FALSE**
(a) Infallibility means complete immunity from sins.		
(b) Prophets cannot commit sins because of the nature of their creation.		
(c) An imperfect teacher cannot deliver perfect teaching.		

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(d) *Mas'um* refers to those prophets and imams who are free from errors and sins.

(e) Prophets were immune from sins but they could make unintentional sins.

Question 3: [12 points]

Briefly discuss two reasons on why the prophets must be ma'sum.

Question 4: [12 points]

Is infallibility an acquired quality or is it bestowed upon the prophets by God?

LESSON 1O

PROPHETS & SCRIPTURES

Almighty God did not leave man alone; he sent guidance in the form of prophets and messengers. According to the common belief of all Muslims, God sent 124,000 prophets and messengers to guide mankind in all parts of the world. The first was Prophet Adam and the last was Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them both).

The basic faith of all the prophets was the same: to call people to the One and Only God *(tawhid)* and bring peace in human society; the differences are only in the codes of law. However, not all the 124,000 prophets were of the same rank and status; some were greater than the other; some were sent as assistants to those messengers who came before them; some were given a holy scripture while others were not.

There were some prophets who came with divine laws which their followers were to implement. Such prophets were higher in rank over the others, and are known as *ulu 'l-^azm* prophets. *Ulu 'l-*

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'azm means "those who possess great responsibility". The *ulu 'l-'azm* prophets are five:

1. Prophet Nuh (a.s.) known in English as Noah.
2. Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) known in English as Abraham.
3. Prophet Musa (a.s.) known in English as Moses. A person who believes in the message of Prophet Musa (a.s.) is known as a Jew.
4. Prophet 'Isa (a.s.) known in English as Jesus. A person who follows the message of Prophet 'Isa (a.s.) is known as a Christian.
5. Prophet Muhammad (a.s.). A person who follows the message of Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) is known as a Muslim.

The divine laws brought by Prophet Nuh were followed till the advent of Prophet Ibrahim and the more advanced divine laws were sent by God through him. Then Prophet Musa was sent with a new set of laws which were even more elaborate; Musa was followed by Prophet "Isa who modified the laws of Musa. Last of all came Prophet Muhammad with the most perfect and comprehensive divine law. No prophet or Holy Scripture is to be sent after Muhammad (a.s.).

Many prophets were also given scriptures—God commandments sent to mankind through His prophets and messengers. The scriptures that were revealed to Prophet Nuh and Prophet Ibrahim are not well-known. The Qur'an talks about scrolls *(suhuf)* of Ibrahim which shows that many books were revealed to him.

The most famous scriptures revealed to the prophets are the following:

1. The *Tawrat* (Torah) revealed to Prophet Musa.
2. The *Zabur* (Psalms) revealed to Prophet Dawud (a.s.) known in English as David.
3. The *Injil* (Gospel) revealed to Prophet Isa.

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4. The *Qur'an* (pronounced as Qur-aan) revealed to Prophet Muhammad.

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Question Paper on Lesson 10
PROPHETS & SCRIPTURES

*Name:*_____ *Student No.*_____

Question 1: [1.5 points for each answer]

Fill in the blanks from the pool of words given below by simply placing the number of the correct word in the blank space.

(a) According to Islamic belief, God sent __ prophets in all parts of the world.

(b) In Qur'anic terminology, all prophets were Muslims and their fundamental mission was to preach __ of God and __ on earth.

(c) The name of the first prophet was __ (a.s.) and the name of the last prophet was __ (a.s.).

(d) All prophets were not __ in status and rank.

(e) The prophets who came with a divine law are called __ prophets.

(f) Christians are those who believe in __ known in Arabic as __.

(g) __ are the people who believe in Prophet Musa known in English as.__.

(h) Prophet Nuh (a.s.) is known in English as __.

(i) Zabur, known in English as __, was given to Prophet Dawud (a.s.) known in English as __.

(j) Torah, known in Arabic as __, was given to Prophet __ (a.s.).

(k) Prophet Isa (a.s.) was given the book.called __ in Arabic and __ in English.

(1) The Qur'an was revealed to Prophet __ (a.s.).

(m) The Qur'an talks about certain scrolls called __ revealed to Prophet __ (a.s.).

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1. Psalms 2. Tawrat 3. 124,000 4. Ibrahim 5. Ulu 'l-'azm 6. unity 7. equal 8. 'Isa *9. David*

10. Muhammad 11. Suhuf 12. Jesus 13. Injil

14. Musa 15. Jews 16. Bible 17. Noah

18. Adam 19. peace 20. Moses

Question 2: [10 points]

Listed below are some of the Prophets mentioned in the Qur'an. Circle the letter before the names of those who came with a divine law.

(a) Prophet Ya'qub (Jacob), (c) Prophet Musa (Moses), (e) Prophet Muhammad (a.s.). (g) Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), (i) Prophet Isa (Jesus), (k) Prophet Ismail (Ishmael).

Question 3:

(a) Prophet Ya'qub (Jacob) (b) Prophet Ayyub (Job).

(c) Prophet Musa (Moses). (d) Prophet Yahya (John).

(f) Prophet Yunus (Jonah). (h) Prophet Yusuf (Joseph).

(j) Prophet Nuh (Noah). (1) Prophet Zakariyya (Zacharia).

Question 3: [10 points]

(a) Specify the names of the Divine Books in the order in which they were revealed, and also write the names of the Prophets who received those Books.

(b) Which Divine Book contains the most comprehensive and eternal laws?

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